

What is claimed is:

1           1. An image delivery system for delivering an  
2 object moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the  
3 object file) to a terminal communicably connected to said  
4 system through a communications network, said system  
5 comprising:

6           (a) image storage means for storing a master  
7 moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the master  
8 file), containing individual moving visual images of a  
9 plurality of users and previously obtained by videoing  
10 the plural users substantially continuously;

11           (b) link information management means for storing  
12 link information linking a plurality of parts of said master  
13 file, which is stored in said image storage means, with  
14 the respective users; and

15           (c) image delivery control means, responsive to the  
16 receipt of an object-file delivery request of one  
17 individual user from said terminal, for reading out a  
18 corresponding one of the plural parts of said master file,  
19 in which part said one individual user appears, from said  
20 storage means, and delivering the read-out part of said  
21 master file to said terminal through the communications  
22 network as the object file.

1           2. An image delivery system according to claim 1,  
2 further comprising (d) image editing control means,

3 responsive to the receipt of an object-file editing and  
4 delivery request of one individual user from said terminal,  
5 for reading out a corresponding one of the plural parts  
6 of said master file, in which part said one individual  
7 user appears, based on said link information, from said  
8 storage means, editing the read-out part of said master  
9 file, and delivering the resulting part of said master  
10 file to said terminal as the edited object file.

1 3. An image delivery system according to claim 2,  
2 further comprising (e) erasing control means for erasing  
3 the corresponding one of the plural parts of said master  
4 file stored in said image storage means, in which part  
5 said one individual user appears, after the edited object  
6 file has been delivered to said terminal.

1 4. An image delivery system according to claim 1,  
2 wherein said image delivery control means controls an image  
3 delivering rate in terms of the number of image frames  
4 per second in accordance with a condition of connection  
5 of said terminal with the communications network.

1 5. An image delivery system according to claim 2,  
2 wherein said image delivery control means controls an image  
3 delivering rate in terms of the number of image frames  
4 per second in accordance with a condition of connection  
5 of said terminal with the communications network.

1           6. An image delivery system according to claim 3,  
2 wherein said image delivery control means controls an image  
3 delivering rate in terms of the number of image frames  
4 per second in accordance with a condition of connection  
5 of said terminal with the communications network.

1           7. An image delivery method for delivering an  
2 object moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the  
3 object file) from a delivery source to a terminal  
4 communicably connected to the delivery source through a  
5 communications network, said method comprising the steps  
6 of:

7           (a) storing both a master moving-visual-image file  
8 (hereinafter called the master file), which contains  
9 individual moving visual images of a plurality of users  
10 and was previously obtained by videoing the plural users  
11 substantially continuously, and link information linking  
12 a plurality of parts of said master file with the respective  
13 users, into a storage device, which is a component of the  
14 delivery source or an external element communicably  
15 connected with the delivery source; and

16           at the delivery source

17           (b) upon receipt of an object-file delivery request  
18 of one individual user from said terminal, reading out  
19 a corresponding one of the plural parts of said master  
20 file, in which part said one individual user appears, from  
21 the storage device, and delivering the read-out part of

22 said master file to said terminal through the  
23 communications network as the object file.

1 8. An image delivery method according to claim 7,  
2 further comprising the steps of:

3 at the delivery source

4 (c) upon receipt of an object-file editing request  
5 of one individual user from said terminal, reading out  
6 a corresponding one of the plural parts of said master  
7 file, in which part said one individual user appears, from  
8 the storage device based on said link information, and  
9 editing the read-out part of said master file; and

10 (d) delivering the resulting part of said master  
11 file to said terminal as the edited object file.

1 9. An image delivery method according to claim 8,  
2 further comprising the step of: at the delivery source  
3 (e) erasing the corresponding one of the plural parts of  
4 said master file stored in said image storage means, in  
5 which part said one individual user appears, after the  
6 edited object file has been delivered to said terminal  
7 in said delivering step (d).

1 10. An image delivery method according to claim  
2 7, wherein in said reading and delivering step (b), an  
3 image delivering rate is controlled in terms of the number  
4 of image frames per second in accordance with a condition

5 of connection of said terminal with the communications  
6 network.

1 11. An image delivery method according to claim  
2 8, wherein in each of said reading and delivering step  
3 (b) and said edited object file delivering step (d), an  
4 image delivering rate is controlled in terms of the number  
5 of image frames per second in accordance with a condition  
6 of connection of said terminal with the communications  
7 network.

1 12. An image delivery method according to claim  
2 9, wherein in each of said reading and delivering step  
3 (b) and said edited object file delivering step (d), an  
4 image delivering rate is controlled in terms of the number  
5 of image frames per second in accordance with a condition  
6 of connection of said terminal with the communications  
7 network.

1 13. An image delivery method for delivering an  
2 object moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the  
3 object file) from a server to a client communicably  
4 connected to the server through a communications network,  
5 said method comprising the steps:

6 at the server

7 (a) rendering the client to display, on a display  
8 screen of the client, a message asking a user to input

9 user identification information on the client;

10 (b) rendering the client to display, on the display  
11 screen of the client, a title or titles of one or more  
12 mastermoving-visual-image files (each hereinafter called  
13 the master file) linked with the last-named user identified  
14 by the input user identification information, each master  
15 file containing individual moving visual images of a  
16 plurality of users including said last-named user and being  
17 previously obtained by videoing the plural users  
18 substantially continuously and stored in a storage device,  
19 which is a component of the server or an external element  
20 communicably connected with the server; and

21 (c) upon receipt of an object-file delivery request,  
22 which designates the title of a particular one of the plural  
23 master files, of said last-named user from the client,  
24 (c1) reading out a corresponding one of the plural parts  
25 of said particular one master file, in which part said  
26 last-named user appears, from the storage device based  
27 on both the designated title of said particular one master  
28 file and time codes representing a location or a set of  
29 locations of said corresponding part of said particular  
30 one master file and stored in the storage device, and (c2)  
31 rendering the client to display the read-out part of said  
32 particular one master file on the display screen of the  
33 client as the object file.

1 14. An image delivery method for delivering an

2 object moving-visual-image file (hereinafter called the  
3 object file) from a server to a client communicably  
4 connected to the server through a communications network,  
5 said method comprising the steps of:

6 at the server

7 (a) rendering the client to display, on a display  
8 screen of the client, a message asking a user to input  
9 user identification information on the client;

10 (b) rendering the client to display, on the display  
11 screen of the client, (i) a title or titles of one or more  
12 master moving-visual-image files (each hereinafter called  
13 the master file) linked with the last-named user identified  
14 by the input user identification information, each master  
15 file containing individual moving visual images of a  
16 plurality of users including said last-named user and being  
17 previously obtained by videoing the plural users  
18 substantially continuously, each said master file being  
19 composed of a plurality of parts in which the plural users  
20 respectively appear and being stored in a storage device,  
21 which is a component of the server or an external element  
22 communicably connected with the server, and (ii) a  
23 plurality of predetermined editing ways for designation  
24 and selection by said last-named user;

25 (c) upon receipt of an object-file editing and  
26 delivery request, which designates the title of a  
27 particular one of the plural master files and selects a  
28 desired one of the plural predetermined editing ways, of

29 said last-named user from the client, (c1) reading out  
30 a corresponding one of the plural parts of said particular  
31 one master file, in which part said last-named user appears,  
32 from the storage device based on both the designated title  
33 of said particular one master file and time codes  
34 representing a location or a set of locations of said  
35 corresponding part of said particular one master file,  
36 (c2) editing the read-out corresponding part of said  
37 particular one master file in the selected editing way,  
38 and (c3) rendering the client to display the resulting  
39 part of said particular one master file on the display  
40 screen of the client as the edited object file.

1 15. An image delivery method according to claim  
2 14, further comprising the steps of:

3 at the server

4 (d) rendering the client to display, on the display  
5 screen of the client, a message asking the user if the  
6 resulting moving visual image of the edited object file  
7 is approved by the user; and

8 (e) upon receipt of the approval of the edited object  
9 file from the client, downloading the edited object file  
10 to the client.

1 16. A recording medium in which an image delivery  
2 program for delivering an object moving-visual-image file  
3 (hereinafter called the object file) from a delivery source



4 to a terminal communicably connected to the delivery source  
5 through a communications network is recorded, wherein said  
6 program instructs a computer at the delivery source to  
7 execute the steps of:

8 (a) storing both (i) a master moving-visual-image  
9 file (hereinafter called the master file), which contains  
10 moving visual images of a plurality of users and was  
11 previously obtained by videoing the plural users  
12 substantially continuously, into a storage device, which  
13 is a component of the delivery source or an external element  
14 communicably connected with the delivery source, said  
15 master file being composed of a plurality of parts in which  
16 the respective users appear, and (ii) link information  
17 linking the plural parts with the respective users; and

18 (b) upon receipt of an object-file delivery request  
19 of a user from said terminal, (b1) reading out a  
20 corresponding one of the plural parts of said master file,  
21 in which part the last-named user appears, from the storage  
22 device based on said link information stored in the storage  
23 device, and (b2) delivering the read-out corresponding  
24 one part of said master file to said terminal as the  
25 requested object file.

1 17. A recording medium according to claim 16,  
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery  
3 source to execute the following added steps of:

4 (c) upon receipt of an object-file editing request

5 of one individual user from said terminal, (c1) reading  
6 out a corresponding one of the plural parts of said master  
7 file, in which part said one individual user appears, from  
8 the storage device based on said link information, and  
9 (c2) editing the read-out part of said master file; and  
10 (d) delivering the resulting part of said master  
11 file to said terminal as the edited object file.

1 18. A recording medium according to claim 17,  
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery  
3 source to further execute the step of (e) erasing the  
4 corresponding one of the plural parts of said master file  
5 stored in said image storage means, in which part said  
6 one individual user appears, after the edited object file  
7 has been delivered to said terminal.

1 19. A recording medium according to claim 16,  
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery  
3 source to control, in said reading and delivering step  
4 (b), an image delivering rate in terms of the number of  
5 image frames per second in accordance with a condition  
6 of connection of said terminal with the communications  
7 network.

1 20. A recording medium according to claim 17,  
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery  
3 source to control, in each of said reading and delivering

4 step (b) and said delivering step (d), an image delivering  
5 rate in terms of the number of image frames per second  
6 in accordance with a condition of connection of said  
7 terminal with the communications network.

1 21. A recording medium according to claim 18,  
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the delivery  
3 source to control, in each of said reading and delivering  
4 step (b) and said delivering step (d), an image delivering  
5 rate in terms of the number of image frames per second  
6 in accordance with a condition of connection of said  
7 terminal with the communications network.

1 22. A recording medium in which an image delivery  
2 program for delivering an object moving-visual-image file  
3 (hereinafter called the object file) from a server to a  
4 client communicably connected to the server through a  
5 communications network is recorded, wherein said program  
6 instructs a computer at the server to execute the steps  
7 of:

8 (a) rendering the client to display, on a display  
9 screen of the client, a message asking a user to input  
10 user identification information on the client;

11 (b) rendering the client to display, on the display  
12 screen of the client, a title or titles of one or more  
13 moving-visual-image master files (each hereinafter called  
14 the master file) linked with the last-named user identified

15 by the input user identification information for  
16 designation by said last-named user, each master file  
17 containing individual moving visual images of a plurality  
18 of users including said last-named user and previously  
19 obtained by videoing the plural users substantially  
20 continuously and stored in a storage device, which is a  
21 component of the server or an external element communicably  
22 connected with the server; and

23 (c) upon receipt of an object-file delivery request,  
24 which designates the title of a desired one master file,  
25 of said last-named user from the client, each said master  
26 file being composed of a plurality of parts in which the  
27 respective users appear, (c1) reading out a corresponding  
28 one of the plural parts of said desired one master file,  
29 in which part said last-named user identified by said input  
30 user identification information appears, from the storage  
31 device based on both the designated title of said particular  
32 one master file and time codes representing a location  
33 or a set of locations of said corresponding one part of  
34 said desired one master file, and (c2) rendering the client  
35 to display the read-out corresponding part of said desired  
36 master file on the display screen of the client as the  
37 object file.

1 23. A recording medium in which an image delivery  
2 program for delivering an object moving-visual-image file  
3 (hereinafter called the object file) from a server to a

4 client is recorded, wherein said program instructs a  
5 computer at the server to execute the steps of:

6 (a) rendering the client to display, on a display  
7 screen of the client, a message asking a user to input  
8 user identification information on the client;

9 (b) rendering the client to display, on the display  
10 screen of the client, (i) a title or titles of one or more  
11 master files (each hereinafter called the master file)  
12 linked with the last-named user identified by the input  
13 user identification information, each master file  
14 containing individual moving visual images of a plurality  
15 of users including said last-named user and being  
16 previously obtained by videoing the plural users  
17 substantially continuously and stored in a storage device,  
18 which is a component of the server or an external element  
19 communicably connected with the server, and (ii) a  
20 plurality of predetermined editing ways for designation  
21 and selection by said last-named user; and

22 (c) upon receipt of an object-file editing and  
23 delivery request, which designates the title of a  
24 particular one master file and selects a desired one of  
25 the plural predetermined editing ways, of said last-named  
26 user from the client, (c1) reading out a corresponding  
27 one of the plural parts of said particular one master file,  
28 in which part said last-named user appears, from the storage  
29 device based on the designated title of said particular  
30 one master file and time codes representing a location

31 or a set of locations of said corresponding one part in  
32 which said last-named user appears, (c2) editing the  
33 read-out part of said particular one master file in the  
34 selected predetermined editing way, and (c3) rendering  
35 the client to display the resulting part of said particular  
36 one master file object on the display screen of the client  
37 as the edited object file.

1 24. A recording medium according to claim 23,  
2 wherein said program instructs the computer at the server  
3 to execute the following added steps of:

4 (d) rendering the client to display, on the display  
5 screen of the client, a message asking the user if the  
6 edited object file is approved by the user; and

7 (e) upon receipt of the approval of the edited object  
8 file from the client, downloading the requested edited  
9 object file to the client.